

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMMAN
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
AMEMBASSY RABAT
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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E.O. 11652: N/A

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TAGS: UNRWA

SUBJECT:FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR UNRWA

1. SINCE ITS CREATION IN 1949, THE UNITED NATIONS RELIEF
AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST
(UNRWA) HAS RELIED HEAVILY UPON THE UNITED STATES FOR ITS

SUPPORT. THROUGHOUT THE YEARS, U.S. CONTRIBUTIONS HAVE REPRESENTED 35 PERCENT OR MORE OF TOTAL ANNUAL RECEIPTS. FOR CY 1977, WE WILL CONTRIBUTE \$48.7 MILLION.

2. IMPATIENCE WITH LACK OF PROGRESS IN RESOLVING THE MISSION OF THIS "TEMPORARY AGENCY", CONCERN OVER INEQUITIES IN THE PROVISION OF SERVICES TO REGISTERED REFUGEES AND ANNOYANCE WITH THE MEA NON CULPA ATTITUDE OF NEIGHBORING ARAB STATES HAVE COMBINED TO MAKE IT INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO SECURE CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL OF SIZEABLE U.S. CONTRIBUTIONS. SIMULTANEOUSLY, THE DEVASTATION OF THE LEBANESE WAR TOGETHER WITH RISING COSTS - ESPECIALLY FOR EDUCATIONAL SERVICES - HAVE SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASED UNRWA'S NEED FOR MONEY.

3. THE ADMINISTRATION REQUEST FOR CONGRESSIONAL AUTHORIZATION OF AN FY 1978 CONTRIBUTION OF \$52 MILLION WAS

REDUCED IN JOINT CONFERENCE TO \$42.5 MILLION - A SUM MUCH BELOW OUR COMPARABLE 1977 CONTRIBUTION. FYI, THE CONGRESS HAS MADE ANY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION FOR FY 78 CONTINGENT UPON THE RESULTS OF A SURVEY OF UNRWA AND THE PALESTINE REFUGEE PROBLEM TO BE UNDERTAKEN BY CONGRESSIONAL STAFF EARLY NEXT YEAR. END FYI.

4. FOR 1976, 13 ARAB STATES, LED BY SAUDI ARABIA, CON-
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TRIBUTED \$14.3 MILLION TO UNRWA. THE TOTAL FELL THIS YEAR TO AN ESTIMATED \$5.8 MILLION. PLEDGES FROM ARAB COUNTRIES FOR 1978 ARE EXPECTED TO BE EVEN LOWER, DESPITE INCREASED NEED, PRICE INFLATION AND THE PROBLEMS OF CONTINUED U.S. SUPPORT.

5. REGARDLESS OF THE OUTCOME OF THE CONGRESSIONAL STUDY, THERE SHOULD BE NO ILLUSION THAT U.S. SUPPORT FOR UNRWA WILL RISE AT A RATE COMMENSURATE WITH INCREASING AGENCY COSTS. MOREOVER, CONGRESSIONAL ATTITUDES TOWARD U.S. SUPPORT FOR UNRWA WILL BE INFLUENCED SIGNIFICANTLY BY THE ATTITUDES AND ACTIONS OF ARAB STATES (PARTICULARLY THOSE ENJOYING OIL REVENUES) WITH REGARD TO MAINTAINING NEEDY PALESTINIAN REFUGEES. IT MUST BE MADE CLEAR THAT THE CONGRESS CANNOT BE EXPECTED TO SUPPORT A CONTINUED U.S. POSTURE OF "PICKING UP THE TAB" FOR INCREASING SHORTFALLS BETWEEN UNRWA'S NEEDS AND ITS REVENUES.

6. UNRWA IS CURRENTLY EXPERIENCING A SHORTFALL OF \$10.5 MILLION. THIS HAS ALREADY NECESSITATED A CUTBACK IN FOOD RATIONS. PLEDGES ARE RUNNING FAR SHORT OF THE CY 1978 BUDGET. FURTHERMORE, EACH YEAR OF OPERATION INCREASES

THE SUM WHICH MUST BE SET ASIDE FOR LIQUIDATION SHOULD UNRWA BE FORCED TO CEASE OPERATIONS.

7. ACTION POSTS ARE REQUESTED TO APPROACH HOST GOVERNMENTS AT THE HIGHEST APPROPRIATE LEVEL FOR THE PURPOSE OF ENCOURAGING GREATER SUPPORT OF UNRWA OR, IN THE CASE OF LEADING DONORS, AT LEAST AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL THEY HAVE CONTRIBUTED IN THE PAST. YOU SHOULD EMPHASIZE THE NEED FOR DONATIONS FOR 1977 AS WELL AS FOR 1978 AND BEYOND. POSTS MAY DRAW ON THE MATERIAL IN THE FOREGOING PARAGRAPHS AND SHOULD MAKE IT CLEAR THAT THE EXTENT OF CONTINUED U.S. SUPPORT MAY WELL HINGE ON THE RESPONSE OF ARAB GOVERNMENTS. WE RECOGNIZE FULLY THAT THE WEALTHY ARAB STATES HAVE TRADITIONALLY SUSPECTED THAT OUR APPROACHES LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IN BEHALF OF LARGER COMMITMENTS TO UNRWA'S FINANCING REFLECTED A U.S. INTENTION TO REDUCE ITS SUPPORT FOR THE AGENCY. YOU SHOULD EMPHASIZE TO HOST GOVERNMENTS THAT WE ARE MAKING THIS APPROACH TO BRING TO THEIR ATTENTION THE VERY REAL LIMITS ON OUR ABILITY TO MEET UNRWA'S BUDGET

DEFICITS AND TO SEEK THEIR ASSISTANCE AND COOPERATION IN MEETING AGENCY'S FINANCIAL NEEDS AT A CRITICAL TIME IN MIDDLE EAST PEACE EFFORTS. EACH POST MAY ALSO SAY WE ARE MAKING THESE POINTS IN OTHER CAPITALS.

8. WE RECOGNIZE THAT OUR INTERPRETATION OF THE RESPONSIBILITY OF ARAB STATES FOR THEIR PALESTINIAN BRETHREN IS DIAMETRICALLY OPPOSED TO THE ARAB VIEW OF U.S./ISRAELI RESPONSIBILITY. QUESTION, HOWEVER, HAS PRACTICAL AS WELL AS PHILOSOPHICAL ASPECTS. IT MUST BE RECOGNIZED THAT THE U.S. VIEW OF SHARED RESPONSIBILITY IS THE ONE WHICH WILL PREVAIL IN THE CONGRESS (AND AMONG THE PUBLIC) AND WHICH WILL DETERMINE OUR ABILITY TO CONTINUE SUPPORT FOR UNRWA.

9. ACTION POSTS ARE REQUESTED TO GIVE THIS MATTER HIGH PRIORITY AND TO REPORT THE RESULTS OF THEIR CONVERSATIONS WITH HOST GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AS SOON AS FEASIBLE.

10. LISTED BELOW IN ORDER OF MAGNITUDE ARE THE ESTIMATED CONTRIBUTIONS BY ARAB STATES FOR 1977. A HIGHER CONTRIBUTION FOR ANY PREVIOUS YEAR IS SHOWN IN BRACKETS.

SAUDI ARABIA \$3,200,000 (11,200,000- 1976)

LIBYA 1,000,000

KUWAIT 600,000 (1,600,000- 1976)

UAE 300,000 (2,275,000- 1975)

JORDAN 241,625 (289,083- 1973)

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IRAQ	122,000 (240,256- 1974)
SYRIA	106,042 (106,666- 1975)
LEBANON	96,720 (128,389- 1975)
QATAR	60,000 (1,060,000- 1975)
MOROCCO	58,667 (57,000- 1973)
OMAN	25,000
BAHRAIN	15,000 (20,000- 1975)
TUNISIA	8,000

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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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